

AMES AND HOLGATE'S
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STANDARD AND MINOR DRAMA.
(NUMBER NINE.)

LADY AUDLEY'S SECRET.

A DRAMA IN TWO ACTS,

BY WILLIAM E. SUTER, ESQ.,

AUTHOR OF

The Pirates of the Savannah, Idiot of the Mountain,
Angel of Midnight, A Quiet Family, Outlaw
of the Adriatic, John Wopps,
&c., &c.

With a description of Costume—Cast of the characters,
Relative Position of the Performers on the Stage,
Entrances and Exits—and the whole of
the Stage Business.

AMES & HOLGATE, PUBLISHERS,
CLYDE, OHIO.

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LADY AUDLEY'S SECRET.

A DRAMA,

IN TWO ACTS.

Adapted from Miss Braddon's popular Work of the same title.

BY

✓
WILLIAM E. SUTER, Esq.,

AUTHOR OF

The Pirates of the Savannah, Idiot of the Mountain, Syren
of Paris, Angel of Midnight, Old House on the Bridge,
Outlaw of the Adriatic, Sarah's Young Man. A Quiet
Family, John Wopps, Rifle Volunteer, Brother
Bill and Me, Give Me My Wife, &c., &c.

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AMES & HOLGATE,
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AMES & HOLGATE, Publishers,
CLYDE, OHIO.

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CAST OF CHARACTERS,

As first performed at the Queen's Theatre, (under the management of Mr. C. J. James,) on Saturday, February 21, 1863.

SIR MICHAEL AUDLEY	Mr. DEVILLE
ROBERT AUDLEY (his Nephew)	Mr. CHARLES SENNETT
GEORGE TALBOYS	Mr. THOMAS SENNETT
LUKE MARKS	Mr. J. GREEN
BIBBS (a Butler)	Mr. W. H. WHITTON
BUBBS (a Footman)	Mr. W. SEYMOUR
LADY AUDLEY	Miss MARION JACKSON
ALICIA (Sir Michael's Daughter)	Miss EMILY SLADE
PHOEBE (Lady Audley's Waiting Maid)	Miss BLANCHE FORD
MARTIN (a Servant)	Miss JENNIE SLADE

As performed at Aiken's Museum, Chicago Ill. (under the management of Frank Aiken,) Monday,
January 2, 1871.

SIR MICHAEL AUDLEY	Mr. F. L. KELLER
ROBERT AUDLEY (his Nephew)	Mr. J. W. BLAISDELL
GEORGE TALBOYS	Mr. J. C. PADGETT
LUKE MARKS	Mr. R. C. WHITE
BIBBS (a Butler)	Mr. OWEN FAWCETT
BUBBS (a Footman)	Mr. E. R. SOGGS
LADY AUDLEY	Mrs. D. R. ALLEN
ALICIA (Sir Michael's Daughter)	Miss EMMA MARBLE
PHOEBE (Lady Audley's Waiting Maid)	Miss KATIE MARLOW
MARTIN (a Servant)	Miss ADA MARR

LADY AUDLEY'S SECRET.

ACT I.

SCENE FIRST.—*Interior of Audley Court. (2nd groove.)*

Enter BIBBS and BUBBS, L.

BIBBS. Pubbs, I caught you at it.

BUBBS. I didn't go to do it, Mr. Bibbs.

BIBBS. You d d go to do it, Bubbs; you went into my private apartment and you——

BUBBS. I went to put it to rights, Mr Bibbs.

BIBBS. And now I've got you to rights, Pubbs. I saw you take up a decanter, fill a glass, and drink it.

BUBBS. Drink the glass, Mr Bibbs?

BIBBS. No evasion, Bubbs. I say, you——

BUBBS. I was taken suddenly so very faint.

BIBBS. You might have felt faint, but you smelt very strong of Sir Michael's choicest port.

BUBBS. Oh! I wish I was a butler, that I might drink as much as you do.

BIBBS. You a butler! never hope to arrive at that dignified station; a butler is expected to be a man of noble bearing and commanding figure—a butler is expected to be a man—that is, in short, such a man as I am!

BUBBS. Then they must be very hard to get, for I never saw such a man as you are in all my life——

BIBBS. (*conceitedly*) I am glad, Bubbs, you have sufficient discernment to do me justice.

BUBBS. And I hope I never shall again! such a pompous domineering——

BIBBS. Bubbs!

BUBBS. Conceited, inflated, stuck up——

BIBBS. Bubbs!

BUBBS. My indignation will have vent, I can't bottle it up any longer, I will speak.

BIBBS. You do, and your speech is very thick; and it isn't your indignation that is speaking—it is Sir Michael's old port! Bubbs, you took more than one glass!

BUBBS. One glass was all I took.

BIBBS. You swear it?

BUBBS. Yes, one glass of port—that's all—and four glasses of brandy.

BIBBS. (*starting*) Horrible! the brandy that I keep for my own drinking! I might have forgiven you for drinking Sir Michael's port, but to presume to swallow my brandy—my own private bottle of——

BUBBS. I didn't swallow the bottle—and, if anybody says I did, it's a lie!

BIBBS. Hitherto unheard of ruffian, you are discharged!

BUBBS. What does that matter to such a smart young man as I am! I shall make it my business to obtain a situation with a lovely young lady with large property, and she'll fall in love with me and marry me!

BIBBS. If she did, she'd be sent to pass the honeymoon in a lunatic asylum! Bubbs, you are discharged—I give you warning.

BUBBS. You are jealous of me with Phœbe Marks, that's it!

BIBBS. Jealous of *you*! Do you imagine Phœbe would cast a look on an undersized footman when there is a full grown butler in the way?

BUBBS. Yes, you *are* in the way!

BIBBS. Phœbe Marks is Lady Audley's own maid, and a great favorite with her mistress, receiving, besides her liberal salary, handsome presents from her ladyship; in short, Phœbe is a charming creature!

BUBBS. Well, and so am I; so it would be a capital match.

BIBBS. Bubbs, you are a little man; and I am tall and powerful, of course I can't be such a coward as to strike you—so there! (*kicks him*)

BUBBS. Oh! why, surely you didn't dare to——

BIBBS. (*kicking him again*) Yes, I did!

BUBBS. Oh! I'll take you before a magistrate.

BIBBS. You've got no witnesses.

BUBBS. Yes I have ; I'll show you bruises.

BIBBS. Get out ! *(Kicks him off, exit L.)*

Enter LUKE MARKS, L.

LUKE. They let me in directly I asked for Phœbe Marks, and said I was her cousin, it shows that she be somebody ; but now I am here, how be I to find her in this great rambling house ?

Enter PHŒBE MARKS, L,

PHŒBE. You need not search far, Luke, for here I am.

LUKE. Ah ! you didn't come to look after me, so I thought I'd best see after you, I come across through the field, and in at the gate agen the moat, and up to the back door of the house.

PHŒBE. I can see the well from my bed room window, and happening to be at the window I saw you approaching, and immediately hurried to meet you, for we were you know, playmates in childhood, and now are sweethearts.

LUKE. Yes, and we are bound to marry one another, you know.

PHŒBE. *(rather sadly)* Yes—yes.

LUKE. You don't seem over pleased about it ?

PHŒBE. *(quickly)* Oh, yes, indeed ! Bnt I—I was just wishing that I were a great lady like——

LUKE. Like your missus, eh ? But 'taint every poor girl, merely because she happens to be born pretty, that is lucky enough to find an old fool of a rich baronet to fall in love with and marry her.

PHŒBE. And Sir Micheal perfectly doats on her ; she has just as much money as she chooses to ask for.

LUKE. Ay, it's a fine thing, Phœbe, to have lots of money, and I hope that you'll be warned by that, my lass, to save up your wages agen we get married.

PHŒBE. And what was Miss Graham, now Lady Audley only three month ago, when she lived in Mr Dawson's house ? nothing but a governess, a servant like me, taking small wages, and working for them as hard, or harder than I did. You should have seen her shabby clothes, Luke, worn and patched and turned and twisted yet always looking nice and upon her somehow, and now she is a great lady.

LUKE. Never you mind her, take care of yourself, Phœbe ! that's all you've got to do. What would you say to a public

house for you and me, by and by my girl? There's a deal of money to be made out of a public house.

PHOEBE. Unless it happens to be a losing speculation. (*aside*) Oh dear! and I've got to marry this man!

LUKE. I should think you would soon get tired of this mortal dull place, I've heard tell of a murder done here in old times.

PHOEBE. Oh, Luke! don't talk like that, or I shall fancy I see a ghost in every dark corner of the old house. (*bell rings*) hark! there is Lady Audley ringing for me—you must go now Luke, but I shall see you soon again.

LUKE. Yes, yes, you go to her ladyship, stick close to her, and seem very fond of her; because the more you can get out of her the better I shall like you, you know.

PHOEBE. (*aside*) Thinks only of what I may bring him, and I dare'n't say I won't have him; oh, dear! *Exit L.*

LUKE. Phoebe's getting to be quite a fine lady here; but I'll soon cure her of that complaint arter she's my wife. Let's see which way did I come in, (*looks about*) and which way am I to get out I wonder.

Enter BIBBS and BUBBS, L.

BIBBS. It's no use trotting at my heels like a poodle; I tell you it's no use, Bubbles you are discharged.

BUBBS. (L.) I won't go till you give me a character for honesty and sobriety.

BIBBS. (C.) Why you drunken robber!

LUKE. (R. *seeing them*) Oh, one of these fellows will tell me, I say, you fellows?

BIBBS. Fellows! (*aside*) Never met with such indignity since I have been a butler! (*to BUBBS.*) 'Tis all through you I am so insulted, he judges me by the company I keep.

LUKE. One of you fellows I say; which is the way out of this queer old house?

BIBBS. How did you get in?

LUKE. What's that to you.

BIBBS. Intolerable impertinence; but never mind now how you got in, you shall be turned out.

LUKE. (*advancing*) Are you the man that is going to—

BIBBS. (*retreating*) Certainly not, I leave all disagreeable work to my subordinates. BUBBS! (*turns to BUBBS, who is asleep in chair L.*) Why, curse the fellow aint— (*pulls him out*

of chair) BUBBS!

BUBBS. What's the matter?

BIBBS. Turn this vagabond out!

BUBBS. Yes; (*seizes BIBBS, shakes him*) Come, get out!

BIBBS. (*c. pitching into him*) Wretch! shake a butler—
hanging's too good for you, drunken brute!

BUBBS. (*m.*) It's your fault, you shouldn't keep such strong brandy.

LUKE. I am the man you are to turn out.

BUBBS. You—let's have a good look at you. (*looks him over*)
Um! Mr. Bibbs I beg most respectfully to decline. (*to L.*)

LUKE. If all the servants are such animals as these, I shall never
get out of the place. *Exit R*

BIBBS. (*shouting after LUKE*) I'm not a servant, and I'm not
an animal—I'm a butler, villain! (*to BUBBS*) you fell asleep while
I was being insulted, and I'll stop it out of your wages!

BUBBS. Oh, Mr. Bibbs! (*leans against him*)

BIBBS. Oh, here's an outrage—a common servant leaning against
a butler!

BUBBS. I do feel so weak and ill, Mr. Bibbs!

BIBBS. You're drunk Bubbs.

BUBBS. Do please carry me up stairs and put me to bed.

BIBBS. I'll put you in the horsepond! wretch, remove your igno-
ble carcass from my dignified shoulder this moment, or I'll—

BUBBS. Oh, Phœbe, lovely Phœbe!

BIBBS. Ah! (*starts from BUBBS, who falls*) Monster, remain
there till I return—I'm going for the sharpest carving knife in
the establishment. *Rushes off R.*

BUBBS. (*on ground*) Oh, law! he's going to murder me, and
I'm in such a weak state; going to kill me, oh! I must crawl up
to his room and have a drop more of his brandy, or I shall never
be able to live through it. (*crawls off L.*)

Enter ROBERT AUDLEY and GEORGE TALBOYS, R.

ROBERT. Well George, here we are, arrived at last at my brave
old uncle's mansion, and though I did not say in my letter to him
that I should bring you with me, as indeed how could I? for I did
not so unexpectedly run against you till the day after that letter
was written, yet for all that, I can promise you a hearty welcome
from Sir Michael Audley; and his wife cannot so soon, prove oth-
erwise than amiable, for as I have told you, my uncle has lately
married for the second time with a mere girl, as young almost, or

quite, as his daughter by his first marriage ; but (*looks at GEORGE*) all my chattering is thrown away upon you, there you stand as gloomy, and as sad——

TALBOYS. (R. C.) Why would you force me to accompany you hither?

ROBERT. Because I saw you so wretched I feared to leave you to your own company. George, George, we were fast friends in early youth ! I lose sight of you for years, and suddenly we meet again—you appear to me the same as of old, except that foreign suns have rather bronzed your features—we enter a hotel together—you carelessly pick up a paper, and the next instant—George what there did you read, what could you read ? nothing that could affect the fortune you have earned ? (*GEORGE shakes his head*) Well, whatever your grief, will you endure it alone ? think you that my friendship is a mere word, that in name only has existence ?

TALBOYS. I know you to possess as true a heart as ever throbbed within a human breast, and would not afflict you with the relation of a sorrow you can do nothing to alleviate.

ROBERT. Is then true sympathy nothing ?

TALBOYS. (*crosses to L.*) Well since you will have it so, know that when you saw me sitting rigid as a statue, and as pale, before that newspaper, it was because therein I had seen recorded my darling wife's untimely death. (*crosses to R. sits, places his hands over face, sobs*)

ROBERT. Heavens ! my poor friend, I—I did not mean you—

TALBOYS. (*rising*) Mine was a romantic marriage—ours was indeed love at first sight. We went to Italy. You know I was never a niggard with my money ; I had but two thousand pounds bequeathed me by my father—well we lived in splendid style till this was gone ; when but a couple of hundred or so were left, we returned to England, to the little watering place which had ever been my dear one's home ; soon we were penniless, but I had no fear for the future, believing that I had influence which would obtain for me a lucrative employment.

ROBERT. And did it not ?

TALBOYS. I could obtain nothing, and when tired out and down-hearted, I returned to my wife, and told her that I had failed in everything, she burst forth into a storm of sobs and lamentations, telling me that I ought not to have married her if I could give her nothing but poverty and misery, and that I had done her a cruel wrong in making her my wife.

ROBERT. (*surprised*) Did she tell you that ?

TALBOYS. By heavens, Robert! her tears and reproaches drove me almost mad, and I rushed from the house declaring I would never enter it again.

ROBERT. Well?

TALBOYS. Well, I flew into the open country, and there dashed myself despairingly on the ground, after a while I grew calmer and could think, and I suddenly remembered that in India I had a relative, a wealthy merchant, and I resolved to go to him; I wrote a few brief lines to my wife which told her that I never had loved her better than now when I seemed to desert her; that I was going far from her to try my fortune, and if I succeeded I should come back to bring her plenty and happiness, that if I failed I would never look upon her face again. I did not leave her to hopeless poverty. for she had her jewels, and trinkets, while I—but no matter now——

ROBERT. And in India you succeeded?

TALBOYS. Not till I had long despaired of success, for the relative to whom I went was a hard man, and made me one of his clerks, with the poor wages of a clerk, that was all; but wasn't I toiling for my darling? Through all that dreary time, her pretty white hand beckoned me onward to a happy future. Why, I have seen her sitting by my side, as plainly as I had ever seen her in the one happy year of our wedded life; and so I toiled on steadily, and at last I conquered.

ROBERT. Brave fellow!

TALBOYS. With the little money which I had saved, I commenced to speculate on my own account, fortune favored me, and at last I awoke one morning to find myself with twenty thousand pounds, and more, and a week after was on board a vessel bound to England, and as I madly believed, to the darling of my life,

ROBERT. But in all that time, did you never write to your wife?

TALBOYS. Never, till a week before the vessel sailed; I waited for good fortune, and when that came, I wrote telling her that I should be in England almost as soon as my letter, and giving her an address where to find me—and I returned, as I hoped and believed, to her love and to a life's happiness, and I find her dead. Helen, my Helen, my wife my darling, my only love! dead! dead! (*crosses L.*)

ROBERT. George there may have been some other Helen Talboys?

TALBOYS. No no, my wife is dead! I know it but too well, for two days since, I stood beside her grave, and upon her tombstone

read my darling's name! (*covers face with hands*)

ROBERT. My poor fellow, what can I say to comfort you?

TALBOYS. Nothing, (*crosses R.*) I must bear the heavy sorrow as best I can. (*going R.*)

ROBERT. Whither are you going?

TALBOYS. Out into the open air, here I am stifled. stifled!

ROBERT. You will presently return to the house?

TALBOYS. Yes, yes, have no fear for me; I shall not lay hands on my life, I would pray to heaven, not outrage it. Oh, Helen! Oh, my wife! dead, dead! (*hurries off R.*)

ROBERT. Poor George! how he grieves; and yet, judging her by his own report, she could not have been a very devoted wife, nor have loved him much, as it appears to me; but then of course I know nothing about it, for I am not a married man—but I suppose that some day I must come to it, though I shall try to put off the evil time as long as possible.

Enter BIBBS, R.

BIBBS. Mr. Robert Audley, I have the honor to be your most obedient very humble servant——— (*bowing*)

ROBERT. Jonathan Bibbs as usual, I know all about it.

BIBBS. Heard of your arrival and was delighted. We have always a hearty welcome for your uncle's nephew. (*bowing*)

ROBERT. (*also bowing*) And my uncle's nephew is very much obliged to you, and has the honor to be your most obedient, &c.

BIBBS. You are looking remarkably well, sir; do you think I am at all altered?

ROBERT. Not at all Mr. Bibbs, you are as great a fool as ever!

BIBBS. He, he, he,—you are always so comical sir. Weren't you surprised when you heard of your uncle's marriage?

ROBERT. No Bibbs, I always felt certain that my uncle would some day marry again, and why should he not?

BIBBS. Ah! (*sighs*) love is an attack we are all subject to, whatever may be our age or condition, whether we be baronet or butler—ah! (*sighs again*)

ROBERT. (*laughing*) Why surely Bibbs, you haven't got a touch of the complaint?

BIBBS. A touch! Sir I have got enough of it to knock me down!

ROBERT. (*laughing*) Well you do look rather upset.

BIBBS. But my marriage, if it ever does take place, will not dispossess my nephew, who always looks forward to be my heir; because you see, Mr. Audley, I haven't got a nephew—my near-

est relation in the world, is my father's mother's sister's daughter's husband: and goodness knows what relationship that is, for I don't.

ROBERT. You rascal, how dare you?

BIBBS. I am sure I humbly beg your pardon, sir. I didn't mean to—to——

ROBERT. Begone unless you are anxious to be kicked!

BIBBS. Well sir, I'm not: I don't mind kicking others. but I don't like to be kicked myself, and you must excuse me, for I very often don't know what I am talking about since I have fallen in love with a charming creature, a great favorite with her mistress, receiving besides her liberal salary, handsome presents from her ladyship.

ROBERT. If you are not gone——

BIBBS, Mr. Robert Audley I have the honor to be your most obedient, very humble——

ROBERT. Rascal! (*exit BIBBS, bowing R.*) I suppose it is thus that all will judge me; but I never thought or cared for my uncle's fortune. I have enough of my own, even should I marry, and I suppose that some day I must marry my cousin Alicia. It might seem to others that the partiality of a young lady who is sole heiress to a very fine estate is rather well worth cultivating, but it doesn't so occur to me. Alicia is a very nice girl, a jolly bouncing girl, with no nonsense about her—a girl of a thousand: but my enthusiasm will carry me no further at present. Hem! here she is: (*To ALICIA, as she enters, L.*) My dear Alicia!

ALI. (*gives her hand*) Ah! cousin, you was longing to see the wax doll with flaxen ringlets that my father has married: of course you will think her the most charming creature in the world—all the men do: I can't tell why—I don't like her.

ROBERT. (*laughing*) I didn't suppose you would, and so no doubt you and my lady, your young stepmother, go at it hammer and tongs. I hope you won't quarrel or say unpleasant things at the dinner table—rows always upset a man's digestion.

ALI. I don't like her: shouldn't I think if she was not my stepmother. I don't like her eyes—something strange and sinister in their expression I think!

ROBERT. Well when I have seen her I will tell you.

ALI. And to think how my poor foolish father doats on her—a man at his time of life ought to know better.

ROBERT. (*laughing*) What! ought to know better than to love his wife?

ALI. Don't be aggravating Robert, come along.

ROBERT. Not yet, a friend came with me whom I must go and look for.

ALI. A friend!

ROBERT. Yes, a poor fellow who has lately lost his wife, and—

ALI. Well, I will go with you in search of this interesting young widower! (*looks at ROBERT coaxingly*) Robert!

ROBERT. Yes, Alicia!

ALI. Of course, now you have come to us at last, you intend to stay with us a good long time!

ROBERT. No, cousin, I must return to town tomorrow morning.

ALI. Oh! (*concealing her disappointment*) You are always very soon tired of Audley, Robert. but of course you have no friends here except your relations at the Court, while in London, no doubt, you have the most delightful society, and—

ROBERT. I get good tobacco; Audley is a dear old place, but when a man has to smoke dried cabbage leaves, you know—

ALI. (*aside*) Oh, to have only one cousin in the world, and he to care no more for you than a dog!

ROBERT. What did you say, Alicia?

ALI. Nothing, you stupid log. (*petulantly seizes his arm*) come along! (*drags him off, R.*)

Enter SIR MICHAEL and LADY AUDLEY, C.

SIR M. Ah, Lucy, I know that I am growing old, that my beard is white—if for your sake dearest, I could but take twenty years from my life!

LADY A. Why should you wish that, when I so love you as you are—you are so good and generous—there are women a hundred times my superiors in beauty and goodness who might love you dearly.

SIR M. You are the delight of my life—where'er you go you carry joy and happiness—all admire and praise you.

LADY A. (*aside*) If they knew me they would curse me.

SIR M. You are the best and sweetest creature that ever lived and I the most blessed of men in having won you to be my wife. Till I saw you I had never loved. My marriage with Alicia's mother was but a dull bargain, made to keep an estate in the family that would have been just as well out.

LADY A. Could I forbear to love the man who sought me that he might raise me to an eminence beyond the hope of e'en my

wildest dreams! Oh, I sometimes doubt if it be really true, that the poor humble governess, Lucy Graham, is now indeed, the great Lady Audley!

SIR M. Would that I could give you a kingdom with my love! (*draws her to him, presses his lips to her forehead*)

LADY A. (*aside*) No more dependence, no more drudgery, no more humiliation—every trace of the old life melted away, every clue to identity buried and forgotten.

SIR M. (*who has been looking off R.*) I thought my eyes were not deceiving me—it is my nephew.

Enter ROBERT and ALICIA, R.

ROBERT. Yes dear uncle, it is really and positively your nephew.

SIR M. (C.) Welcome boy, welcome! (*introducing him*) Lady Audley.

LADY A. (L. C.) I have heard much of you Mr. Audley, both from my husband and Alicia, and am much delighted to make your acquaintance.

ROBERT. (R. C. *aside to ALICIA*) What a smile! no wonder my poor uncle was caught—she is perfectly fascinating, charming!

ALI. (R. *aside to ROBERT, spitefully*) I tell you she is a wax doll. But of course, like all the men, you are smitten with her at first sight.

ROBERT. Nonsense, do you think I don't know better, than to fall in love with my aunt?

SIR M. What are you two chattering about?

ROBERT. Why—why—oh, uncle, I hope you will pardon me, but I have taken the liberty of bringing here with me, a very dear friend.

LADY A. Any friend of yours, I am sure, would be welcome here.

SIR M. He knows that, the rogue; but who is he Robert—do I know him?

ROBERT. No uncle; and poor fellow, you will not find him very entertaining company I fear, for his wife is lately dead, and—

LADY A. (*slightly starting*) Ah!

ROBERT. He had but just returned from the Indies—
(*LADY AUDLEY is violently agitated*)

SIR M. The unhappy man shall receive from us every consideration. What is his name?

ROBERT. George Talboys. (*LADY AUDLEY shudders and*

remains petrified) Hush, uncle, he is here!

Enter GEORGE TALBOYS, R.

My dear George, it was no false promise when I told you that here you would find a hearty welcome—my uncle, Sir Michael Audley. *(they bow)* Uncle, with your leave—*(SIR MICHAEL draws back a step—ROBERT leads TALBOYS towards LADY AUDLEY)* Lady Audley this is—*(passes him next to LADY AUDLEY)*

TALBOYS. Great heavens! *(rooted to the spot—ROBERT observes them—SIR MICHAEL and ALICIA conversing R.)*

LADY A. *(L. quickly rousing—aside to TALBOYS.)* An hour hence—the lime tree walk near the old well.

TALBOYS. I am mad! oh surely I am mad! *(rushes off R.)*

SIR M. *(turns)* Eh! What is this, whither is he scampering?

ROBERT. You must forgive him uncle, he cannot yet endure the society of any one.

LADY A. *(crossing to SIR MICHAEL, laughing lightly)* It would almost appear that it was I who drove him hence, and yet I have never been accounted altogether frightful.

ROBERT. *(aside)* There is something I cannot understand, something that—

SIR M. Robert, give your arm to Lady Audley.

ROBERT. Oh, certainly—delighted. Lady Audley, if you will allow me?

LADY A. *(takes his arm)* You will not follow the example of your friend, and run away from me? *(laughing--exit both, R)*

SIR M. *(gives arm)* Come Alicia, my dear!

ALI. *(as they exit)* One's own cousin to fall in love with a wax doll—it's shameful!

SCENE SECOND.—*The lime-tree Walk; Well c.; the old stone wall that surrounds it only partly visible through the brushwood; half dark; Music.*

Enter GEORGE TALBOYS slowly, L. U. E. advances; suddenly stops, listens a moment, hurrying up is met by ROBERT AUDLEY. who enters L. U. E.

TALBOYS. *(draws back)* Ah! you!

ROBERT. You say that in a tone as if you expected some one else, and that my presence is a disappointment to you.

TALBOYS. How came you to seek me here?

ROBERT. You fled from us so abruptly; and as her ladyship

hurried to her room immediately afterwards, to dress for dinner as she said, I availed myself of the opportunity to seek you everywhere about the grounds, and at last you see——

TALBOYS. (*glancing towards back*) Leave me instantly!

ROBERT. George you are expecting some one; must I tell you?

TALBOYS. Tell me nothing, but leave me—delay not a moment I entreat you, and swear not to linger near this spot—that you will neither watch nor listen!

ROBERT. George, do you then believe me capable of——

TALBOYS. I believe nothing, but if you would that we should continue friends——

ROBERT. Enough! it is a strange request, but I pledge to you my honor that I will in this obey your wishes.

TALBOYS. Thank you, thank you—now go at once.

ROBERT. You promise that you will presently return to the mansion?

TALBOYS. Yes.

ROBERT. Adieu, then! (*aside—looking L. U. E.*) Heavens! Lady Audley! now my word is passed, but hereafter I will attempt to solve this mystery. *Exit R, 1 E.*

Music.—TALBOYS turns, sees that ROBERT is gone—walks to R. looking after him—LADY AUDLEY enters L. U. E. to L. C.—TALBOYS turns sees LADY AUDLEY, and starts.

TALBOYS. Ah! woman, devil, or whate'er you are——

LADY A. Hold! let us endeavor to commence calmly.

TALBOYS. Calmly! are you not my wife?

LADY A. I was! the wife whom you deserted—abandoned!

TALBOYS. No, tis false! you know it, I but fled from you in the hope I might return and make you wealthy.

LADY A. Listen to me. After your departure, I vainly sought employment—a wife whom her husband had deserted could not be innocent of all fault—and no one would receive me as the instructress of their children. I was penniless—helpless—hopeless; before me was starvation or a repulsive life of infamy! I shrunk from both and resolved to live anew, and for myself alone. I ceased to be Mrs. George Talboys, forgot even that I had been He en Maldon, and became Miss Lucy Graham. For a miserable stipend I toiled as a governess, was seen, admired, and loved by Sir William Audley, he offered me his hand, weary of poverty and drudgery, and fixed in the belief that you would never return to claim me, I became Sir Michael's wife.

TALBOYS. Oh! infamy!

LADY A. Scarcely was I married when your letter reached me it told me you was about to quit India, named the time when I might expect once more to behold you. What did I then? not groan and tear my hair, no! I hastened to my birthplace, I knew that there, a young girl, a playmate of my childhood, was dying rapidly of consumption. She did die. Her mother for a heavy bribe consented that the girl should be buried in my name. I then caused to be inserted in the papers, the announcement of my own death, and if you have visited the grave, you have seen the words 'Helen Talboys' on the tombstone.

TALBOYS. Oh! horrible! and this the woman I have so wildly loved, who wantonly, for her own wild selfish ends, has driven me to despair.

LADY A. The past cannot be recalled; the wealth and splendor I have attained I will not lose. Go then, let us forget each other; you shall share always of the riches at my command—I will do anything sooner than abandon the wealth and position I have won and go back to my old life.

TALBOYS. You offer me wealth. I am worth twenty thousand pounds—'twas all for you, for you—and now——

LADY A. Is it then revenge you seek? to crush the woman whom you have loved—who has been your wife.

TALBOYS. While I live I will never forgive you for the lie that has broken my heart. You have plucked it from my breast, have trampled upon it, and now—I have no heart in which to feel one sentiment of mercy for you. I would have forgiven you any wrong but this one deliberate and passionless wrong you have done me. No power on earth shall turn me from my purpose, to take you to the man you have deceived and make you tell your terribly wicked story.

During the last speech, LADY AUDLEY'S hand is working beneath the bosom of her dress, at end of speech unseen by TALBOYS, partly draws forth a poinard, instantly thrusting it back.

LADY A. (*advancing towards TALBOYS*) I defy you—I defy you! denounce me to Sir Michael, I will declare you to be a madman or a liar, and I defy you to convince the man who loves me, blindly worships me, that you have any claims to me—farewell. (*starts L. U. E.—TALBOYS follows—seizes her wrist drags her back*)

TALBOYS. You go not yet.

LADY A. (*shakes him off*) You have bruised my wrist!
(*again grasps poinard*)

TALBOYS. Your infamous cunning shall no longer avail you ; by heaven ! if there was but one witness of your identity, and that witness was removed from Audley Court by the width of the whole world, I would bring him there to swear to your identity and to denounce you.

LADY A. Ah ! (*with a wild exclamation she suddenly turns and stabs TALBOYS ; he utters a cry, staggers against the wall of the well, which gives way with a crash, he falling into the well ; LADY AUDLEY throws the poinard into the brushwood, exits L. U. E. Music*)

SCENE THIRD.—*Hall in Audley Court.*

Enter BIBBS and BUBBS, L.

BIBBS. Don't stagger after me intoxicated wretch ! you have your discharge—have received your wages—you are no longer servant here—go !

BUBBS. Not without a written character for honesty and sobriety : besides, why should we separate ? I forgive you all the injuries you have inflicted on me !

BIBBS. Injuries !

BUBBS. Those kicks you know ; you will not be doing your duty as a respectable butler if you discharge the most sober and industrious servant in the establishment.

BIBBS. If you don't instantly get out——

BUBBS. I won't go till you pay me my wages !

BIBBS. Rascal ! I have paid you !

BUBBS. Yes, but there was no witness, and I gave you no receipt, so I shall swear I have never received a farthing ; and you'll have to pay me again !

BIBBS. Why, you——

BUBBS. I'll teach you what it is to take the bread out of an honest man's mouth !

BIBBS. I'm perfectly paralyzed !

BUBBS. A steady hard-working young man that is always on his legs—down early and up late !

BIBBS. (R.) Wretch, wretched wretch, my wrath has an exterminating power. I could have forgiven you everything but presuming to love Phoebe Marks.

BUBBS. (L.) I don't love her—I want to marry her—that's all ; and if I have cast my eye——

BIBBS. Yes, I know you have a cast in your eyes, but I won't allow you to squint at her—she shall be mine as soon as ever I can get her; and don't I wish it may get her !

BUBBS. Will you be mine Phœbe Marks?

BIBBS. Phœbe Marks, no ; (*threatens*) but you shall have other marks if you don't mind.

BUBBS. You presume on your majestic figure, but though little I am brave, (*squaring*) and if you will only tie your hands behind you, we'll contend in a deadly struggle, and the conquerer shall have Phœbe Marks.

Enter MARTIN L.

MAR. Phœbe Marks, indeed, who is she I wonder, that you should quarrel about her ! (*crosses to c.*) I am surprised at you Mr. Bibbs !

BIBBS. Phœbe Marks is a charming creature, a great favorite with her mistress, receiving besides her salary, handsome presents from her ladyship.

MAR. Well, she is engaged to be married !

BIBBS. Not yet Martin. for I haven't yet found courage to propose to her.

BUBBS. No more have I.

BIBBS. Silence you Bubbs !

BUBBS. I shall talk as long as I like, Bibbs !

BIBBS. (*indignant*) Bibbs, plain Bibbs !

BUBBS. Yes, you are very plain Bibbs !

BIBBS. Say Misier Bibbs.

BUBBS. Not now I m discharged !

BIBBS. Ignorant brute !

MAR. I tell you Phœbe Marks is engaged to be married to her cousin Luke.

BUBBS. Look, look where ?

MAR. It's as true as my name is Martin.

BIBBS. No no, it won't do Martin ; I can't swallow that.

MAR. You will have to do it though.

BIBBS. It can't be, she has often looked at me, and must have perceived what a superior man I am.

MAR. So you are Mr. Bibbs, the man she is about to marry is a rough dissipated savage.

BUBBS. And she might have had a quiet sober young man.

BIBBS. If I but knew him.

MAR. You do, he was here this morning, and told me that you two talked about turning him out, and that if you had attempted it, he would have killed you both.

BIBBS. That ruffian! then I shall have nothing to do with him.

BUBBS. Nor I neither.

MAR. You'd better not, for I tell you he is a savage, and always carries a knife about him, which he uses without ceremony.

BIBBS and BUBBS. Oh! (*they stagger back*, BIBBS to R. BUBBS to L.)

MAR. (*aside*) To cut his bread and cheese with. (*aloud*) If you are wise Bibbs, think no more of Phœbe Marks. *Exit* L.

Enter LUKE, R. *quietly advances behind them to c.*

BIBBS. (R,—*not seeing* LUKE) Lost to me forever!

BUBBS. (L,—*ditto*) Not a chance left!

BIBBS. For a longer period than that—(*each time they speak, they stagger a step back towards c.*) And he would actually kill such a fine looking man as I am.

BUBBS. Cut off a steady, sober——

BIBBS. Kill me in cold blood!

BUBBS. When he's in a passion.

BIBBS. Oh!

BUBBS. Oh!

(*both fall against* LUKE)

BIBBS. Support me Bubbs!

BUBBS. Hold me up Bibbs!

LUKE. (*gruffly*) What the devil do you mean by——(*both start, turn towards* LUKE, *see their mistake, run off frightened*, BIBBS R., BUBBS L.) What is all this about? I thought I heard Phœbe's name as I came in—ha, ha, I shall have her now; and what's better, the public house too—ha ha ha! *Exit* L.

SCENE FOURTH.—*Lady Audley's boudoir, elegantly furnished, door* R. U, E.

LADY AUDLEY *seated on couch* L.; ALICIA *on a chair* R.

LADY A. (L., *shrugging her shoulders*) It seems very hard that you cannot love me, Alicia. for I have never been used to make enemies; but since it seems that it must be so, I cannot help it. You won't try to injure me?

ALI. (*rising*) Injure you! How should I injure you?

LADY A. (*rising*) You will not try to deprive me of your father's affection?

ALI. I may not be so amiable as you are my lady, and I may

not have the same sweet smiles and pretty words for every stranger I meet ; but I am not capable of contemptible meanness,—and even if I was, I think you are so secure of my father's love, that nothing but your own act will deprive you of it.

LADY A. What a severe creature you are Alicia ! I suppose you mean to infer by that, that I'm deceitful. Why I can't help smiling at people and speaking prettily to them. I know I'm no better than the rest of the world, but I can't help it if I'm more pleasant—it's constitutional. (ALICIA *is going* R.)

Enter PHOEBE MARKS. *door* R.

LADY A. Ah ! Phoebe—oh, stay Alicia ; has Robert Audley heard yet anything of the friend who so suddenly deserted him ? I—(*compressing her lips*) I have forgotten the name of—

PHOEBE, Mr. George Talboys. (LADY A. *starts*) I do not know my lady.

LADY A. (*smiling*) What a bother to make, because a man takes it into his head to run away from those whom his own grief will not suffer him to be sociable.

ALI. (*aside*) She is right, I do hate her, frivolous, heartless, giggling wax doll !

LADY A. (*sitting on couch* L.) I can tell by your looks, Phoebe, that you have come to plague me about your marriage with your cousin. You surely are not in love with the fellow ?

PHOEBE. I do not think I can love him. We have been together from childhood—my mother almost reared him—I was but fifteen when she died, and almost with her last breath she exacted from me a promise to marry Luke, and now I daren't refuse to be his wife. When a boy he was always violent and revengeful. I saw him once take up a knife in a quarrel with his mother. My lady, I dare not refuse to marry him.

LADY A. (*rising*) You silly girl, you think he'd murder you do you ? what nonsense ! I shall be very sorry to lose you, but I have promised to stand your friend in all things. What does your cousin mean to do for a living when you are married ?

PHOEBE. He would like to take a public house, my lady. If you would see him now.

LADY A. He is then at hand ? oh by all means let him enter, and he shall take a public house, and the sooner he drinks himself to death the better.

PHOEBE. (*going to door*) You may come in, Luke.

Enter LUKE R. hat in hand, does not bow, but fixes himself c. rubs his head and stares at LADY AUDLEY)

LADY A. Young man, your marriage with Phoebe is agreed upon, and I shall give you fifty pounds. How, do you not thank me sir? or is it by rubbing that bullet head and staring, that you express your gratitude?

PHOEBE. (*close to LUKE, R. c.*) Tell my lady how thankful you are Luke.

LUKE, (*savagely*) But I'm not so over and above thankful; fifty pounds ain't much to start a public. You'll make it a hundred my lady?

LADY A. (*indignantly*) I shall do nothing of the kind, and I wonder at your impertinence in asking it.

LUKE. (*insolently*) Oh yes you will though! (*LADY AUDLEY draws herself up haughtily—he advances—he speaks in a low distinct tone*) The stone round the old well is all broken away my lady. (*she starts*) and I happened to come into the lime-tree walk just in time to see how it was done. (*LADY AUDLEY shudders*) You'll make it a hundred, my lady?

LADY A. (*recovering herself*) Well, yes and you shall never want a twenty pound note, while I have the power to give it,

PHOEBE. Oh, thank you my lady. (*LADY A. sits on couch*)

Enter ROBERT AUDLEY, R. door,

LUKE. (*as he goes off R. with PHOEBE*) I knew she would make it a hundred—I knew she would. (*LADY AUDLEY, does not perceive ROBERT who walks slowly over beside her, and gazes earnestly on her for a moment before speaking*).

ROBERT. LADY AUDLEY!

LADY A. Ah! (*starting to her feet*) You, why do you come creeping into the room to frighten me out of my poor wits. (*peevishly*) You ought to know how nervous I am.

ROBERT. LADY AUDLEY, heaven knows I wish to be merciful, that I would willingly spare you, but justice must be done. Shall I tell you why you are nervous in this house my lady?

LADY A. (*with a slight laugh*) If you can.

ROBERT. (R. C.) Because for you, this house is haunted.

LADY A. (L. C.) Haunted!

ROBERT. Yes, haunted by the ghost of George Talboys.

LADY A. (*after a moment passed in endeavouring to suppress her agitation*) What do you mean? Why do you torment me about this George Talboys, who happens to take it into

his head to keep out of your way for a while? What is George Talboys to me, that you should worry me about him?

ROBERT. He was a stranger to you, my lady, was he not?

LADY A. What could he be to me but a stranger? But if he be dead, I'm sorry for him. If he lives, I have no wish either to see him, or to hear of him.

ROBERT. Lady Audley, that announcement in the newspapers of his wife's death, which struck my poor friend to the heart, was a cruel lie, a base and cowardly blow in the dark—it was the treacherous dagger-thrust of an infamous assassin.

LADY A. (*shrugging her shoulders*) Reliculous.

ROBERT. George Talboys' wife is still alive.

LADY A. You are mad.

ROBERT. And you, my lady, you are she.

LADY A. By what right do you dare?

ROBERT. The evidence I have collected against you wants only one link to be strong enough for your condemnation, and that one link shall be added. I will spare no trouble in completing the chain, unless—

LADY A. (*eagerly*) Unless what!

ROBERT. Unless the woman I wish to save from degradation and punishment, accepts the mercy I offer her, and takes warning while there is time.

LADY A. She would be a very foolish woman if she suffered herself to be influenced by any such absurdity. If you choose to insist that I am Helen Talboys, you may—I shall not attempt to hinder you.

ROBERT. Then you will be able to bring some one forward who can identify you with the past?

LADY A. If I were placed in a criminal dock I could, no doubt, bring forward witnesses to refute your absurd accusation. But I am not in a criminal dock, Mr. Audley, and I do not choose to do anything but laugh at your reliculous folly!

ROBERT. It is to be a duel to the death, then, my lady? (*speaking solemnly*) You refuse to accept my warning—you refuse to go hence and repent of your wickedness in some foreign place, far from the generous gentleman you have deceived and fooled by your false witcheries. You choose to remain here and defy me?

LADY A. I do! (*looks him full in the face*) It's no fault of mine if my husband's nephew goes mad, and chooses me for the victim of his monomania.

ROBERT. So be it then my lady. I last saw my friend, George Talboys in the lime-tree walk, and left him as I saw you approaching to join him; he was seen by others to enter those gardens, but he was never seen to leave them—I do not believe he ever did leave them. I believe that he met his death within the boundaries of those grounds, and that his body lies hidden below some quiet water, or in some forgotten corner of the place. I will have such a search made as shall level this house to the ground, and root up every tree in those gardens, rather than fail in finding the grave of my murdered friend.

LADY A. Ah! (*uttering a cry, and tossing her arms wildly over her head*) You shall never live to do this, I will kill you first. Why have you tormented me so? Why could you not let me alone? What harm have I ever done you that you should make yourself my persecutor, and dog my steps, and watch my looks, and play the spy upon me? Do you want to drive me mad? Do you know what it is to wrestle with a mad woman? (*laughing wildly*) No, you do not or you would never—— (*drawing herself up*) Go away Mr. Audley—(*changing her tone*) You are mad I tell you, you are mad!

ROBERT. (*going towards door*) You have refused to accept my mercy; I wished to have pity upon the living, I shall henceforth remember only my duty to the dead.

LADY A. What will you do? What need I fear from one who has lost his wits? (*defiantly*) What will you do?

ROBERT. That question shall be answered when you stand upon the scaffold, murderess.

LADY AUDLEY utters a wild shriek, presses her hand to her heart, staggers and falls senseless, one arm rests on couch which she could not reach—*Music*

END OF ACT FIRST.

ACT II.

SCENE FIRST—*Castle Inn at Mt. Stanning—Wainscoted room; fireplace R.; doors, L. 2 E. and R. U. E. raised gallery at back, in it's centre, a door; stairs R. leads to gallery.*

Music—LUKE MARKS and BUBBS seated at table, on which are bottles glasses and candle lit—LUKE tipsey, BUBBS diito, a long pipe in his hand.

LUKE. (*L. of table*) Don't talk to me; I tell you I am the most unfortunate man in the world.

BUBBS. What's your troubles to mine? See how I have come down in the world only in two months, since that pompous fool Bibbs bundled me off. (*standing up*) Look at me! Are these clothes anything like the handsome livery I used to wear?

LUKE. Hold your noise and sit down.

BUBBS. Wait till I light my pipe. (*trying to light it at the candle*) Come, I say; no tricks.

LUKE. (*savagely*) What do you mean?

BUBBS. Why, let the candle alone; what do you keep shaking it about for?

LUKE. Bah! (*seizing the candle and thrusting it into BUBBS' face*) Her.

BUBBS. Oh! (*flops back into chair and drops pipe*) Mr. Marks, you have set light to my nose.

LUKE. And you have broken your pipe. No wonder the bailiffs are going to sell me up to-morrow, when people come into my house and destroy my property in this audacious manner.

BUBBS. Yes, Mr. Marks; there's been an inve—inve—what dy'e call it—on your goods, and I'm the man in possession.

LUKE. Curse this house; I might have done some trade, I dare say, only I've always had the blue devils ever since I came to it, it's so dull; so I was obliged to drink up my own liquors to keep my spirits up.

BUBBS. Seems to me, that was the way to lower 'em.

LUKE. And when I'm drunk, I'm apt to be quarrelsome, and so I frightened away the few customers there was, and now I'm to be sold for nine pound rent.

BUBBS. And I'm the man in possession; a most degrading occupation for a sober industrious young man. Where's the brandy?—no—I drunk that last; where's the gin? no—I'll have some beer this time. (*takes jug and drinks*)

LUKE. Sold up for nine pounds! (*rising*) but it won't come off. I've got a friend; I've sent Phoebe to Lady Audley—she'll help me, she *must*.

BUBBS. I had a kind of hankering after Phoebe, she's a pretty girl; and to think that she should marry such an awful ugly fellow as you are.

LUKE. (*threatening him*) What!

BUBBS. You mustn't my good man; it's against the law to strike

a man in possession.

LUKE. Hold your tongue, then : 'taint long since Lady Audley sent me the money to pay the brewer ; but I didn't pay him though. I went about among my friends and spent it that way.

BUBBS. That beer don't agree with me. I must have a drop more gin. (*drinks*)

LUKE. It's worth summut to know summut you didn't ought to know.

BUBBS. It was through Phœbe that I lost my place—nothing else ; for as I was a steady sober young man—I don't like that gin, give me some brandy. (*drinks*)

LUKE. (*returns to seat*) Drop that bottle.

BUBBS. No ; I won't drop the bottle. I should spill it and break the brandy.

LUKE. Bah ! (*snatching bottle*) give it here.

BUBBS. (*hands in pockets*) Yaw—I'm so dreadful drowsy !

LUKE. (*fills glass*) Well, go to sleep. (*drinks—lights pipe*)

BUBBS. Yes, and when I woke I should find you had bolted with all my furniture. (*head sinks on his breast*)

Music—Enter PHŒBE L. door.

LUKE. (*brutally*) So you've condescended to come home at last ma'am. I thought you was never coming no more.

BUBBS. (*half-a-sleep*) That's pretty Phœbe's voice ; and she's married to an ugly drunken brute, instead of a sober——

LUKE. (*to BUBBS raising jug*) Do you want me to split your skull ?

PHŒBE. (*mildly*) I've been longer than I intended to be, Luke ; but I've seen my lady, and she's been very kind, and—and she'll settle this business for us.

LUKE. (*rising, smoking*) She's been "very kind," has she ? (*with a chuckle*) Thank her for nothing. I know the vally of her kindness. She'd be uncommon kind, I dessay, if she wasn't obligated to be it.

PHŒBE. Hush ; Luke, not so loud.

LUKE. (*to BUBBLES*) Oh ! that fellow——

PHŒBE. I was not thinking of him : but Mr. Robert Audley is yonder, in his room (*pointing up to door on gallery*)—and—

LUKE. Oh, he is fast asleep long ago, was as tired as a dog he said, and wanted to be up early to-morrow. I asked him to sit down here a bit, but he wouldn't and went off to bed.

PHŒBE. So much the better.

LUKE. Rather strange, when Mr. Robert Audley is so handy to Audley Court that he should take up his quarters in our rickety place; there's a reason for it, no doubt—something the matter between him and my lady I fancy.

PHŒBE. Yes, Luke, I—I think so.

LUKE. You jade, you know so; he told us that he had an objection to going to Audley Court just now, and so as he didn't want to leave the neighborhood just now he came here.

PHŒBE. Yes, Luke, we know all that, but——

LUKE. None of your sarce! where's the nine pounds to pay the rent?

PHŒBE. My lady has promised to settle the business for us, and she's coming down here to see about it to-night, Luke.

LUKE. What? (*starts, lets pipe fall*)

BUBBS. (*half asleep*) You mustn't damage the furniture; I'm the man in possession.

LUKE. My lady coming here to-night?

PHŒBE. Yes, Luke, she said that she would follow at once and——

LUKE. Ah! I know. (*aside*) She fears that when the liquor is in, I shall let the secret out. Well let her come.

Music—Enter LADY AUDLEY L. glances around the room, advances to c.

LADY A. (*pointing to BUBBS*) That I suppose, is the——

BUBBS. (*half asleep*) I'm the man in possession.

LADY A. I have come to pay him, and send him about his business.

LUKE. (R. C.) Bah! you might have given the money to Phœbe as well as to have brought it yourself. We don't want any fine ladys up here, prying and poking their precious noses into everything.

PHŒBE. (L.) Luke, Luke! when my lady has been so kind.

LUKE. Curse her kindness! it aint her kindness as we want, gal, it's her money. She won't get any snivelling gratitude from me. Whatever she does for us, she does because she is obliged, and if she wasn't obliged, she wouldn't do it

LADY A. (*violently*) Stop! I didn't come up here in the middle of the night to listen to your insolence. (LUKE is cowed) How much is the debt?

LUKE. Nine pounds.

LADY A. (*takes out purse*) Let that man give me a receipt before I go.

LUKE. (*shakes BUBBS*) Don't you hear, wake up!

BUBBS. (*rousing*) Let the furniture alone! I'm the man in possession! (*LADY AUDLEY places note, and four sovereigns on table before BUBBS*)

LUKE. Sign this—there's your money! (*puts pen into BUBBS' hand*)

BUBBS. Which paper am I to sign? seems to me there's two or three of 'em.

LUKE. What's your name?

BUBBS. William BUBBS.

LUKE. Here then, (*guiding his hand, spelling*) W-i-l-l-e-m.

BUBBS. It don't seem very plain?

LUKE. How do you spell Bubbs?

BUBBS. B-u-ebbs.

LUKE. There. (*as before*)

BUBBS. That's only a blot.

LUKE. Never mind, it will do, there are plenty of witnesses—here—(*gives receipt to PHOEBE, she to LADY AUDLEY, who puts it in her purse*) take your money—*hands sovereigns to BUBBS*)—and now—(*takes BUBBS by collar, shoves him to L.*) Go to the devil.

BUBBS. I shan't! I shall go home, I know I've nothing more to do with your goods and chappels, but as far as your beer, and your brandy, and gin are concerned, why you see (*rubs stomach*) I am still the man in possession. *Exit L. door*

PHOEBE. You mustn't go home alone my lady, you'll let me go with you?

LADY A. Yes, yes, you shall go home with me, and remain until morning dawns, if your husband——

LUKE. (R.) Oh! let her go, I don't want her, and now that I'm once more master here, I shall go into the little bar parlor and have a glass of good strong stuff before I turn in. Good night, my lady, I dessay you'll hear from me again before long, somehow I'm always in trouble short of money. *Exit door R. U. E.*

LADY A. (*aside*) Ruffian;—(*suddenly*)—Phoebe, in which room does Robert Audley sleep?

PHOEBE. (R. *surprised*) That, my lady, is the room he always occupies when here. (*points to door on gallery*)

LADY A. Oh, indeed! Well, Phoebe, now let us go. (*starts and suddenly stops as if remembering*) Ah!

PHOEBE. What is it my lady?

LADY A. I had forgotten something very particular which I have yet to say to your brute of a husband.

PHŒBE. I will fetch him to you my lady.

LADY A. (*stopping her*) No, I will call him myself. Go you forward, and wait for me at the turn of the road; I shall not be a moment.

PHŒBE. But, my lady——

LADY A. Go I tell you? That which I have to say to Luke, is for his ear alone. and I must be certain you are not within hearing. (*Music—PHŒBE gazes at LADY A. who opens door, L.—PHŒBE crosses and goes off—LADY A. closes door—and advances*) If this old house was burnt to the ground, who would wonder? All would cry, "A fire caused by the landlord in one of his drunken fits" and there would be an end. Once set a-going how rapidly this old building would be levelled to the earth; and my two enemies shall perish with it. (*goes to door R. U. E. looks off*) Luke is there drunk. Robert Audley in yonder chamber. (*pointing, and advancing slowly*) A light applied to the curtains, the dresses, and the old tapestry in Phœbe's room—Yes 'tis there the fire must commence. (*Music—she takes candle, and slowly ascends stairs on to balcony—listens at door*) Not a sound. Ah! the key is in the lock. (*turns it twice, takes out key, listens at door*) Still quiet; he has not heard.

Exit cautiously, R.

A pause—lights down—LUKE staggers on, door R. U. E

LUKE. (*tipsy*) Now I am drunk; that last strong dose has settled me. Hey, no light! The draught I s'pose. (*hits chair L. of table*) And a man is more drunk in the darkness than in the——(*falls in chair, spreads arms on table, and lays head on them*)

Music—Enter LADY A.—candle in hand—on gallery from R. descends stairs, advances c., not seeing LUKE—lights partly up

LADY A. 'Tis done! a short time and this house, my enemies, too, will be in ashes. Now I must hasten and to join Pecebe or—(*Music—she takes a step to put candle on table; sees LUKE, utters a cry, dropping candle. LUKE raises his head, exit LADY A. at door*)

LUKE. What the devil was that? something seemed to——

(pulling himself to his feet—flame from R., on balcony) I shall bolt the door and go to bed. (staggering towards door, he twirls round, coming with his back against it) Curse me, if ever I shall be able to get to bed. (suddenly sees the flame) Why, what's that? (Music—he staggers up and partly ascends the stairs).

LUKE. The old house is on fire. (with a drunken chuckle) Well, I shan't put it out; I'll leave it to burn itself out—let it burn, let it burn. (Music—he sways about, and then rolls helpless off the steps on to the ground—flames and red fire burst strongly forth).

SCENE SECOND.—*Front Chamber.*

Enter BIBBS slowly, L.—stops, draws forth his handkerchief, and applies it to his eyes.

BIBBS. I'm a bereaved butler: I've lost a charming creature, a great favorite with her mistress, receiving, besides her liberal salary, handsome presents that—oh! isn't it an affliction; I know no more what I'm about. Sir Michael asks for vinegar, and I give him the pepper. Well why shouldn't I—goodness knows that Phoebe Marks has given me pepper; what I suffer no one knows, I don't know myself. I'm falling away to a skeleton; in the first week of Phoebe's marriage, it's a positive fact that I lost seven pounds and a half of manly flesh—and I have every reason to believe that this has been going on ever since, and when a man comes to lose seven pounds and a half for more than three months, just consider what it must reduce him to. (*handkerchief to eyes*)

Enter MARTIN, R.

MAR. Poor Mr. Bibbs, how can you go on fretting in this way about Phoebe Marks, who never cared a straw for you! I didn't think you was so weak, Mr. Bibbs.

BIBBS. Yes I am weak Bibbs; and so would you be weak if you had lost seven and a half pounds per week, for three months together—seven times twelve is eighty-four, and twelve halves—Oh! the total is something awful!

MAR. I can't think what should make you so fond of her.

BIBBS. She was a charming creature, receiving besides her liberal; handsome salary, presents that—

MAR. I am afraid you are mercenary, Mr. Bibbs.

BIBBS. Not at all; it's my feelings—how am I to get them back? how am I to recover the seven pound and a half a week that

I—when shall I be again the fine, portly man that I used to be? Oh! (*handkerchief to eyes*).

MAR. It's all fancy, Mr. Bibbles; there is not the slightest difference in you. (*looking at him admiringly*) You are the same fine man you always was.

BIBBS. Nonsense, nothing of the sort. I am sorry you should drive me to make an indelicate observation, but where's my stomach? What has become of my noble stomach?

MAR. Why, there it is, as rotund as ever!

BIBBS. Nonsense, I tell you, I know better. No stomach that was ever born could—no, it couldn't sustain unmoved for two months a weekly loss of seven pound and a half!

MAR. (*crosses to L.*) It's my opinion you have taken to tippling, Mr. Bibbs. *Exit, L.*

BIBBS. There never was a man more proud of his stomach. and to see it reduced to a mere skeleton of an abdomen—I never know now that I have got a stomach at all, except at dinner-time; I'm very miserable, and so low that when I'm in the cellar, bottling, I'm sure to be deeply affected. (*puts his handkerchief to his eyes*).

ALICIA. (*entering R.*) No, he will never return; he doesn't love me, and has gone away to be rid of me, for he sees—(*half crying*) he sees that I love him, and——

BIBBS. (*seeing her*) I beg your pardon, Miss Alicia.

ALI. Oh! what will become of me! (*putting her handkerchief to her eyes*).

BIBBS. (*aside*) She is affected at beholding my sorrow; how very kind of her! (*business with handkerchief*)

ALI. What is the matter Mr. Bibbs?

BIBBS. A charming creature, receiving besides her liberal mistress, salary presents.

ALI. Don't be a fool Mr. Bibbs. (*wipes her eyes*)

BIBBS. You are in sorrow Miss Alicia, it can't be as great as mine—you haven't lost seven pounds and a half a week, for——

ALI. Bibbs, you are an idiot. *(exit B.)*

BIBBS. How sweet to us in grief is the sympathy of our fellow creatures—especially of our superiours. Oh, Phoebe, charming salary, receiving besides her liberal creature, handsome Lady Audley from her presents. Oh! (*Exit L. 'kerchief business*)

SCENE THIRD—*Apartment; window, R. C., door, R.*

Music—LADY AUDLEY seated L., PHOEBE at window.

PHOEBE. My lady! my lady!

LADY A. What is the matter?

PHOEBE. There is a fire my lady! (*LADY A. goes to window*)

LADY A. Yes, I am afraid it is a fire—at Breatwood most likely—at any rate, it's nothing to us. (*turns from window*)

PHOEBE. Oh! my lady, it's nearer, much nearer, it's at Mount Stanning! (*LADY A. walks to R. to conceal her agitation*) It's the inn that's on fire! (*hurrying forward, L.*) I know it is! I know it is! I have always feared this would happen in some one of Luke's drunken spree. I wouldn't mind it if 'twas only the wretched place; but there'll be life lost! there'll be life lost! (*crying, and wringing her hands*) There's Luke too tipsy to help himself, unless some one helps him! There's Mr. Audley asleep. (*PHOEBE observes LADY AUDLEY as she smiles triumphantly.—struck with a thought, falling on her knees and clasping her hands*) Oh, heavens! say it's not true, my lady! say it isn't true! It's too horrible! it's too horrible!

LADY A. What's too horrible?

PHOEBE. The thought that's in my mind—the dreadful thought that's in my mind.

LADY A. (*fiercely*) What do you mean, girl?

PHOEBE. Why did you go up to the castle to-night, my lady? you who are so bittered against Mr. Audley and against Luke, and who knew that they were both under that roof? As there is a heaven above me, I think you went to that place to-night on purpose to set fire to it!

LADY A. (*grasping PHOEBE's arm and dragging her to her feet*) Fool! idiot! coward! is your husband such a precious bargain that you should be lamenting and pining for him? What is Robert Audley to you, that you behave like a maniac because you think he is in danger? You see a red patch in the sky, and you cry out directly that your own pretty hotel is in flames—as if there were no place in the world that could burn except that. Go home and look after your husband and your lodger—go! (*going up to R. door, and clashing it open*) I don't want you.

PHOEBE. I don't mind your cruel words, my lady. I don't mind anything if I'm wrong.

LADY A. (*sternly*) Go back and see for yourself—I tell you again, I don't want you here. (*Music—she walks forward to L., PHOEBE hurries off, R. door, leaving door open*) It is more than I can bear—suspected—hunted—forced before the world to wreath my face with smiles, and chatter idle gossip, while my heart is torn with torture—is rent with agony! (*producing a phial*) Oh, that I had courage to swallow but a few drops of this, and so end all for ever! (*reflecting*) Yet, no—why should I, now? (*putting away phial*) That girl will not dare even to hint her suspicions to the world, and I have nothing now to fear. Luke, in his drunkenness, would fall an easy prey, and for the other, I took good care that he should not escape the flames my hand had kindled. Yes, the devouring fire has consumed his life—has left of him nothing but a charred and blackened mass which——

ROBERT AUDLEY *enters suddenly, R. door—Music—*LADY AUDLEY *utters a wild cry, and staggering back to L., clings to the back of a chair, glaring terror-stricken on* ROBERT.

ROBERT. You are surprised to see me, my lady! Do you know how I escaped perishing in the fire last night at Mount Stanning?

LADY A. (*hoarsely and with difficulty whispering*) No.

ROBERT. I did not sleep in the room that had been prepared for me, so that the door of that room was double locked to no purpose. The place seemed wretchedly damp and chilly, and the chimney smoked abominably, and I persuaded the servant to make me up a bed upon the sofa in the small ground floor sitting room which I had occupied during the evening. (*LADY AUDLEY'S head droops upon her breast*) My Lady Audley, you were the incendiary. It was you whose murderous hand kindled those flames. It was you who thought by that thine horrible deed to rid yourself of me—your enemy and denouncer. What was it to you that other lives might be sacrificed? If you could have rid yourself of me, you would have freely sacrificed an army of victims, (*LADY AUDLEY sinks groaning into the chair*) I bore the poor drunken wretch through the flames, but not till he was burnt beyond hope of recovery, grateful to me, he has desired to see me ere he dies; he has, he says, a confession to make to me which concerns yourself and George Talboys. (*LADY AUDLEY shivers convulsively*) For the last time I ask you, will you

confess what you are, and who you are, in the presence of the man you have deceived so long. (LADY AUDLEY starts to her feet, dashes her hair from her face.)

LADY A. Bring Sir Michael! bring him here, and I will confess everything—everything! what do I care? Heaven knows I have struggled hard enough against you, and fought the battle patiently enough, but you have conquered, Mr. Robert Audley. It is a great triumph is it not? a wonderful victory! You have used your cool, calculating, frigid, luminous intellect to a noble purpose. You have conquered a *madwoman*.

ROBERT. A madwoman!

LADY A. Yes! when you say that I killed George Talboys, you tell the truth. When you say I murdered him treacherously and foully, you lie—I killed him because *I am mad!* because when George Talboys goaded me, as you have goaded me, and reproached me, and threatened me, my mind never properly balanced, utterly lost its balance, and I was mad! Shall I tell you where you may find the mangled body of your friend? at the bottom of the well in the old lime tree walk. Now bring Sir Michael, and let him rightly know the woman he has wedded, let him know that she is a bigamist, an incendiary and a murderess! let him know too that she is mad! that she is mad! (*laughs wildly, tossing up her arms, and then dashing herself to the ground. ROBERT is standing petrified.—Music*)

SCENE FOURTH.—*Front Chamber.*

Enter ALICIA, R.

ALICIA. Robert has entirely deserted me, fallen in love with some one else, I dare say. As if it wasn't always expected that a cousin was to fall in love with his cousin, when his cousin is a female cousin, *I mean*. If I had known that he intended never to propose to me, I might have turned my attention to somebody else! Oh! the wretch, why did he make himself so agreeable, and compel me to fall in love with him, if he never intended to marry me.

Enter ROBERT, R., in deep thought.

ROBERT. Alicia, my dear, where is Sir Michael?

ALICIA. My father! in the library, I believe. Goodness, what is the matter with you? You look so doleful—that is

enough to make one burst into tears only to look at you!

ROBERT. Nonsense, Alicia; there is nothing the matter with me except that——

ALI. Yes, you?

ROBERT. Nothing!

ALI. Nothing?

ROBERT. Yes, that is all that is the matter with me, I assure you.

ALI. I know better, sir; the wax doll has struck you!

ROBERT. (*preoccupied*) Upon my word, nobody has struck me with a wax doll! Oh, now I see; you mean——

ALI. Do you know, sir, that I have many admirers; that I might, if I liked, marry half-a-dozen young gentlemen?

ROBERT. No you might not; there is an Act of Parliament which expressly forbids such terrible immorality!

ALI. How silly!

ROBERT. Yes, very silly—I quite agree with you. But you mean, I suppose, that there are fellows in love with you; and I am not at all surprised, for you are a fine, generous-hearted, bouncing girl!

ALI. I don't like to be called bouncing; I hate to be thought a bouncer. I know you would think more of me if I were pale and consumptive.

ROBERT. Well, then, can't you contrive to procure an interesting inflammation of the lungs? Alicia, I am your cousin; so consider me your brother.

ALI. I don't want a brother.

ROBERT. No; because you would not be allowed to marry your brother. Alicia, if you have set your heart on being my wife, say so; for in that case it would become my duty——

ALI. I don't want a dutiful husband: I want one that would love me.

ROBERT. Well, I love you——

ALI. You do?

ROBERT. Have always loved you——

ALI. You have?

ROBERT. In the most cousinly manner; and, of course, if you wish it, I will marry you.

ALI. You will?

ROBERT. Some day; and you will have to wait I can't tell how long, for just now I have something far more important to attend to.

ALI. But, Robert,——

ROBERT. Don't detain me, I must seek Sir Michael.

ALI. Yes; but——

ROBERT. (*crosses to L.*) Don't bother me, now, there's a good girl; say no more about it now, and we'll talk the matter over, when I come back here, next winter. *Exit, L.*

ALI. He wants me to wait till the spring-time of my life is gone; but now that it is arranged that we are to be married, it is for me to fix the day; and I'll name an early one, and if he objects, I'll have half-a-dozen stout men to carry him to church.

Exit, L.

Enter BIBBS slowly, R., stops and puts his handkerchief to his eyes.

BIBBS. A charming creature! her lady is a great favorite, receiving, besides her present mistress, a handsome—oh! the more I think of it, the more I feel the loss I have sustained—young women with a bit of property are so very scarce.

MAR. (*entering L.*) You know, I suppose, that the lady of your love has been burnt out?

BIBBS. Yes, and my heart is frozen out. Oh, Phoebe Marks!

MAR. Why grieve now that she is lost to you forever?

BIBBS. You don't know what a cruel blow it is, to be disappointed when you have set your heart on a charming creature, who, receiving besides——

MAR. Yes I know, but there are other charming creatures who having been careful of their wages and perquisites, have a nice bit of money.

BIBBS. I don't care for money, but such a man as I am ought not to marry any woman without any; and when I hear of sensible females who have saved some money, I always wish that I could marry them all, and take them and their property in a lump. But where find these charming creatures?

MAR. Well, here is one of them.

BIBBS. You? you have saved a sum of money?

MAR. Yes, I have lived in this service almost from my childhood, and have been very careful.

BIBBS. Martin, my dear, I have long entertained a secret affection for you.

MAR. For Phoebe you mean!

BIBBS. Never! what do I care for the burnt-out wretch? My grief for her loss was all a pretence, because my manly pride

could not endure you should behold a love I feared you would never requite.

MAR. Why should you fear that, and you in such a responsible situation, and such a fine and portly man.

BIBBS. I was, till I lost my—— (*putting his hand on his stomach*)

MAR. If I must confess it, I have long entertained a partiality for you, Mr. Bibbs.

BIBBS. And you are the girl that I have all my life been looking for.

MAR. Your noble presence, your dignified bearing——

BIBBS. Your sparkling eyes, and the money you have saved——

MAR. I always said my husband should be a fine tall stout man.

BIBBS. And I made up my mind that my wife should be a little creature, timid as a fawn, and slim and delicate as a clothes prop. Come to my majestic arms. (*embraces her*)

Enter BUBBS, R.

BUBBS. Oh! here's goings on. Is it a part of a butler's duty to cuddle the female domestics?

BIBBS. What business have you here? None at all with this young lady of property, I am certain.

BUBBS. No, for I see that it's you who are the man in possession.

BIBBS. I thought you wouldn't bear malice, and as I am out of place—nobody seems to know when they have got a steady, and sober young man!

BIBBS. Why you are drunk now!

BUBBS. That's to celebrate my return to sobriety, for I left off drinking half an hour ago, and I'll never drink any more!

MAR. Give him one more trial?

BIBBS. At this blissful moment I can refuse you nothing, dearest!

BUBBS. And you shall find that I'll be sober every day of my life—(*aside*) and I won't let him see me when I'm drunk every night.

MAR. How is Luke Marks?

BUBBS. Dead! burnt and crushed; couldn't get over it. I am sorry to say he was far from being a sober young man!

BIBBS. Oh! gracious, then, Phoebe is now a widow!

MAR. Well, Mr. Bibbs, what is that to you?

BIBBS. Nothing my love, merely an observation, nothing more. (*aside—crosses L.*) I forgot for a moment that the charming was no longer receiving her lady with a liberal besides, and—no—that's not right ; but never mind.

Trio—Come Lasses and Lads.

MAR. Upon the hill brow is the church you know,
And thither we soon will hie.

BIBBS. And when we are wed, we'll have such a spread,
And to eat a good lot I'll try ;
With lots of choicest wine—
That's quite understood ;

BUBBS. And I'll drink it, drink it, drink it, drink it,
'Cause I know it's good.

OMNES. And we'll drink it, &c., &c.,
'Cause we know it's good.

MAR. I'll talk very loud, and I'll feel very proud,
When I'm a butler's wife.

BIBBS. And we'll have a boy, to be our joy
And the glory of our life ;
To make him grow up smart,
I'll do the best I can.

BUBBS. And make him a steady, steady, steady, steady, and
sober man.

OMNES. And we'll make him, a steady, steady, steady, steady,
and sober man ;
Fol, lol, tol, lol, &c. *Reel, sing and dance off L.*

SCENE FIFTH—*Apartment as before.*

Music—ROBERT L., SIR MICHAEL R., *looking horror-stricken on* LADY AUDLEY, *who is c., crouching on both knees before him, her face covered with her hands.*

SIR M. I cannot here any more of this terrible secret which, now revealed to me, must embitter all the years yet left to me. Robert you will not act too harshly with her whom I have thought—my wife. You will remember in all you do, that I have loved her very dearly and truly. I cannot say farewell to her. I can but pity her, as I now pray heaven may pity her. (*going slowly R.*

LADY A. (*raising her head*) I should be sorry for you if I could, for you have been very good to me ; but I can't, I can't. I can feel nothing but my own misery. I have ever been selfish, now more selfish than ever in my misery. Happy prosperous peo-

ple may feel for others—I laugh at other people's sufferings, they seem so small compared with mine. (SIR MICHAEL *goes off* D. R.; LADY A. *rising*) Let me go—my brain is on fire. (*crosses* L.)

ROB. My uncle may believe that you are insane—I do not deem you mad, but dangerous; yet for all our sakes, madness shall be supposed the excuse for your crimes, and the remainder of your life shall be spent in a mad woman's proper home.

LADY A. (*alarmed*) What mean you?

ROB. A lunatic asylum, my lady.

LADY A. No, no, not that, oh, heaven! not that.

ROB. It is a fate too merciful for you—double murderess that you are!

LADY A. Double murderess?

ROB. Yes, Luke Marks is dead of the hurts received in the fire you kindled.

LADY A. Ah! but you shall not take me to a madhouse—I will not be burried while yet alive—I would laugh at you and defy you if I dared. I would kill myself and defy you if I dared. But I am a poor pitiful coward, and have been so from the first, afraid of my mother's horrible inheritance, afraid of poverty, afraid of George Talboys, afraid of you; but you shall not take me to a madhouse, you shall not! you shall not! (*rushing wildly off*, L.)

ROB. I will do that which I think just to others and merciful to her—I will give her time and opportunity for repentance.

Enter GEORGE TALBOYS, *hastily*, R. door, *very pale*.

TAL. Robert! Robert! dear friend.

ROBERT. (*recoiling, amazed*) Great heavens! George Talboys, and living!

TAL. Yes, yes, dear friend. (*they embrace*)

ROB. I have mourned you as dead; believed that your wife—but, where have you been? Why did she confess to having slain you, if—oh! can it be true that she is mad indeed.

TAL. Luke Marks rescued me, with much difficulty, from the well into which I had fallen, after receiving the murderous blow intended for my slaughter; he conveyed me to his home, and there I have languished until now, his prisoner. His death has set me free.

ROBERT. And why—why —

TAL. That he might have power o'er my wife—I mean o'er

Lady Audley. Oh! Robert, you will be silent. I could not bear to see her perish shamefully. I will return to foreign climes, and leave her to the wealth and splendor she has sinned so horribly to obtain.

ROBERT. Oh! too late, too late for that; to Sir Michael she has confessed her guilt—and now —

LADY A. (*entering totteringly, L.*) I shall not go to a madhouse—I shall not! I—(*seeing TALBOYS and standing petrified*) Ah! It is his spirit! I have seen it in my dreams! but thus—oh! mercy!—mercy!

TAL. Helen, let it comfort you to know that you have failed in your dreadful purpose—that I pardon you, and will go where you may never more behold me—where I shall be as though I was, indeed dead to you!

LADY A. Talk not to me thus; it is to mock my agony for I am dying!

BOTH. Dying!

LADY A. Your threat (*to ROBERT*)—the madhouse! I have taken poison—death is on me even now! (*sinks to ground*) If I had delayed a few minutes only!—but this torture heaven has reserved for the supreme moment! Oh, agony more terrible than those with which the poison rocks my frame! but 'tis almost over. You will not give my memory to infamy? No, you will not dare!—for your own sakes you will not dare! and buried in the grave with her will be “Lady Audley’s Secret”—ah!

Half raises herself, presses both hands to her head, and falls back dead; SIR MICHAEL appears, door R., and gazes on her with grief and terror; TALBOYS kneels beside her, covering his face with his hands; ROBERT raises his hands towards heaven. Music.)

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